l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

buckled roofs, roll up the unwieldy goat-hair tents and load them on the sturdy camels.

Of that time, when the sun was moving northward and the tribe was moving with it—a time when Faris went to see his betrothed nearly every day—one memory stands out in high relief.

"Let us go hunting," Faris said to me one morning, and bade Mnahi hand him the automatic hunting-rifle which I had given him as a keepsake. We went to our horses, which stood patiently between the lines, loosed their halters, and vaulted on to their backs. Then we cantered out into the plain.

As we swept across a hill-top, we saw, a long way off, a good-sized herd of gazelles in full career and heading straight toward us. From time to time the animals disappeared from sight in a hollow, but as they came nearer, we saw that they were in flight from a Bedouin, pursuing them on a swift sorrel mare. He was plainly seeking to cut out a pure white buck, the leader of the herd. Again and again the buck found safety by pushing into the midst of his racing mates; but the sorrel was nimble of foot and well-trained, and her rider skilful. The herd repeatedly broke and scattered; and the pursuer steadily gained on his prey. At last he fired at close range and the gazelle-buck tumbled over and over and lay still.

When we had come closer to the hunter, who was already dressing his game, we noticed with amazement that it was no man at all. "By my faith, it is a maiden," cried Faris. We urged on our horses, and I was the first to come up with the huntress. She had risen, the blood-

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

by his wife and children, and two brothers and their families, was on his way north to the Ruala (five or six hundred miles mean nothing to these people) to treat with his "Brother" there for the recovery of some thirty Sulkan camels which, he said, a band of unidentified Ruala had driven off.

One of the tents of these Arab gypsies was made of sewn gazelle skins. For tent-pegs they used oryx horns. I observed that these people had no vessels made of wood; all I saw were of leather. In place of rugs and cushions they used the skins of asses, ostriches, panthers, and antelopes. Their clothing, too, excepting the shepherd's cloaks, was made of pelts and hides.

Faris proposed to Ralib that he should guide us into the Nufud and promised to charge himself with the matter of the camels and round them up as soon as he returned to the tribe; Ralib's family, meanwhile, were to wander northward without him. Ralib accepted; and soon thereafter we departed from the wild Jabal Tubayk.

We had followed Ralib's lead for several uneventful days when, on reaching a *wadi*, he pointed out the fresh tracks of a panther. Leaving our camels behind under guard, we followed the trail on horseback for some distance, when suddenly our mares snorted through wide-open nostrils; they had winded the beast of prey. We dismounted and crept cautiously towards an escarpment, where Ralib surmised the panther was in hiding. It had been there, in fact, but its tracks led farther: Ralib, the Sleyb, made sure that the panther had struck down a gazelle in that very place and had dragged it off. The

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

big cat must therefore be close by, and we had need to 224
be doubly cautious. We scattered in the *wadi* and advanced singly.

Presently I saw, not fifty paces off, beside an overhanging bank on which the sun shone, two panther cubs at play. Round them lay the remains of their last meal—splintered bones and ragged bits of gazelle skin. Then I became aware also of the mother panther, stretched out in the shade under cover, only a part of the back and the tail showing. I motioned to Faris and Mnahi, and for a while we just watched the rare spectacle. Ralib must be somewhere near, but our eyes searched for him in vain, and of course we could not call out.

Faris lifted his rifle and communicated to me in pantomime that he meant to aim at the big panther—perhaps that her young might be taken alive. Suddenly, however, two shots came from the side, their echoes mingling in the *wadi*. The pretty game of the little robbers had come to an abrupt end; quivering and bleeding, the kittens lay on the hard gravel. Their mother, roused from her slumber, was up in a bound, flung herself over her young, snatched up one between her lips and was about to disappear from sight, when Mnahi, who until then had looked on quietly, fired. The big cat made one somersault and lay still. Sand and stones rolled down the bank. The animal did not stir; to all appearances it was dead. Now we called out and Ralib appeared with apologies; he had shot the cubs because from his position he could not see the mother.

The deadly bullet had lodged in the panther's throat. "Daughter of the Terrible One," Ralib called her. She

1: Rawan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

●224 was indeed a formidable cat. Her paws, not big but very powerful, were armed with claws as long as a man's finger, which doubtless had ripped the jugular vein of many a gazelle and antelope and broken the back of many a goat.

Ralib plunged his long knife into the panther's body, then drew it across the throat and ankles, severed the head and paws and flung them at my feet as souvenirs. Then he ripped open the belly and chest and tore out
[225] the heart. Like a savage-bred animal, he bit into the bloody tissue and sucked his mouth full of the panther's life-fluid. He believed that this potent draught would add to his own boldness and strength.

In the course of our progress Ralib discovered imprints of the big feet—the two pairs of toes—of an "Earless One," as the Bedouins call the ostrich. We followed the well-marked track until we could make out the bird with our field-glasses, far away. It was feeding. Cautiously we beat up, taking three hours to cover a couple of miles or so; then waited while the ostrich took a sandbath. Presently a second ostrich, not visible to us before, rose from the ground nearby and joined the bather—clear indication that they were brooding birds and that their nest must be quite close.

During the heat of noon the birds rested, then resumed feeding till evening. Several times they disappeared from sight, but Ralib was certain from experience that their nest was not far from the spot where the second ostrich had first shown itself; and, sure enough, before sunset the pair returned and bedded down near the place where we had first observed them.

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

Panther and Ostrich

Warily Faris, Mnahi, and I approached, following the 224 ●
minute instructions given us by Ralib, who remained behind with our horses. We crept up to within about fifty paces of the resting birds and took cover. With the glare gone, as the sun went down, I could easily distinguish the male from the female.

I betrayed myself by a slight movement and at once the two ostriches sprang up and ran about frantically with flapping wings. Then the hen took flight with seven bristly small chicks, the cock following protectively in the rear. The chicks, however, ran hither and thither, and Faris contrived to catch three of them and secure them by tying their legs with leather straps.

Ralib, who had come up with the mares, warned us against pursuing the ostriches. Once in full flight, they could not be overtaken by even the fleetest horse; but, if not harried, they would only run in circles and finally return to their young.

Nevertheless, Faris, eager only to bag the male, gave chase. The cock had maintained his place as rearguard, looking back frequently as he ran with paddling movements of his wings; but, when he saw the horsemen in pursuit, he abandoned his family and dashed off, now straight ahead, now zigzagging abruptly. Mnahi, Ralib, and I now joined in the chase, and in a quarter of an hour came close enough to turn the ostrich in Faris's direction. The youth threw himself from his galloping horse, which ran on a distance before it could stop. Kneeling, Faris took a hasty aim and fired twice. As the shots rang out, the bird took a tumble and remained lying on its side, fluttering. Faris leaped up, dropped

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

224 rifle and cloak, and ran up to the ostrich struggling in its death throes. He whipped his knife from his belt and plunged it into the bird's throat close to the breastbone. Then he bent back the heavy wings and plucked the white display feathers, a foot long.

Ralib regarded the prey appraisingly. With his dagger he then skinned the bird, opened it, and with an expert eye carved out the best breast-pieces. Roasted, the meat tasted like that of a fat bustard and was tender enough; but to my taste the liver and the heart—the latter small for so large a bird—were better.

While we were galloping after the ostrich cock, I noticed that the hen had returned in a wide curve to the nesting-place, and at her calls the chicks came out of hiding and let themselves be herded away by her. But three of the young, those which Faris had caught and bound, could not have got away. We vainly searched for them, however, and were on the point of giving up when we discovered them, half-hidden in the sand and still as mice.

251 When we resumed our forward march, Faris stowed the young ostriches in the saddlebag of his own camel. Throughout the long journey he fed them on fresh buds and shoots, but particularly on caterpillars. Wild and shy at first, hunger subdued them on the second day; and before a few weeks had passed, they would trustfully feed from our hands.

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins III 34

224 A tribesman entered the tent with the information that the chief's hunting-party was returning.

It was a wonderful sight as the horsemen drew up. There were about seventy of them, with hares, gazelles, and bustards hung over the withers and cruppers of their mares. A pack of greyhounds had been unleashed and they immediately sought the shade of the tent, where they stretched themselves out with heaving flanks and hanging tongues. Several slaves got up and brought them water, which they lapped up thirstily. Meanwhile, the riders had dismounted, and unloosing the casting-leads of the hooded falcons, set each bird on a padded perch before the rug of the *sheykh*.

222 576 Tai', on alighting from his horse, passed into the women's apartment. After a while he appeared before us. In honour of his guest, he had girded on an old sabre.

We all stood up and greeted him. Ali came forward and kissed the *sheykh's* hand, and pressing it to his forehead, said in his extravagant manner:

"Ya Muhafut—O Protector! God grant thee long life, most magnanimous of all Arabs!"

Then Ali presented me to the *sheykh*, who embraced me. With simple and grave courtesy he said:

"Peace be with thee."

With a polite movement of his hand, he indicated to me my seat and I sat down.

[576] After we had settled in our places, Sheykh Tai' rolled a cigarette and lighted it between his own lips before he handed it to me.

223 Our host was a man nearly as tall as Ali, but very slender and small-boned. Rarely have I seen such refined

1 [Sheykh Tai' of the Tai Bedouins -- Analyst]

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins M34

hands and feet in a man,—in fact, his whole appearance was arresting.

For a Bedouin, he had an unusually pale complexion, set off by a brilliantly black beard and raven locks. He preferred to dress almost entirely in black. His Arab head-cloth, sandals, and soft camel-hair cloak were black, as well as the wide shawl wound round his waist. Even his mare was black, a rare thing, for most Bedouins hold black horses in disfavour. Headstalls, halter, saddle, and saddle-cloth—all were black, relieved only by delicate silver embroidery and a few silver ornaments. His silver-hilted sword, too, was carried in a black scabbard.

Sheykh Tai' was vain. He loved arms and horses, but above all he adored his little son, Farhan. According to Ali, he had not much affection for his wives, who were reputed to be beauties; but he was proud of them as he was of all his possessions—his great herds and extensive lands.

The Tai's Bedouins kept relatively few camels, but large numbers of sheep and goat, which suffer much from the depredations of wolves in winter and spring. Sheykh Tai' told me that these nimble-footed robbers from the inaccessible retreats of the Turkish Mountains had come down again into the snow-free lowlands. They had already attacked exposed Bedouin camps and caused great damage, although the watchful herdsmen had been continually on guard.

Sheykh Tai' was, like Nimrod, a "great hunter before the Lord", and liked nothing better than to be riding abroad. On the eighth evening after our arrival, he

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins M 54

224 called a meeting of his sub-chiefs, and made known to them that he desired a great wolf drive organized for two days hence. Every tribesman with a horse was to join in the hunt, so as to provide a chain of beaters. Sheykh Tai' himself, his lieutenants, and I, armed only with lances, were to ride down the wolves and spear them. This was not the usual method of hunting wolves, but is certainly more romantic and exciting than shooting them with long-range rifles from automobiles.

224 411 When Sheykh Tai' asked me if I knew how to handle a *rumh* (the Bedouin lance) I had to own my ignorance; but it was not long before I learnt how to handle it under the tuition of my good friend.

These spears are from fifteen to eighteen feet long. They are of light bamboo, which the Bedouins cut in the swamps of the lower Euphrates. Below the triangular steel head they are decorated with tufts of the black and grey down-feathers of the ostrich, a few fluttering red ribbons, and tinkling coils of very thin silver chains. The butt is sheathed in a painted iron ferrule.

224 When at the appointed hour beaters and followers had lined up at the *sheykh's* tent, and all was ready, Sheykh Tai' rammed the butt of his lance into the ground and, using it as a vaulting-pole, leaped on his horse's back.

Besides Sheykh Tai' and myself, only the sub-chiefs carried lances. The rest of the men took their rifles with them, but merely to start the game and for defense in case of unexpected meeting with enemies.

224 857 Sheykh Tai's nine-year old son, Farhan, with a heavy Mauser pistol in his belt, accompanied us. His short, bare legs clung to the sides of an unsaddled mare, which he

lt Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins M 54

cleverly guided with his thighs and hands, and by his voice making her walk or gallop. 224 857

An hour before sunrise we rode into the steppe, waking to a glorious morning. I was mounted on a spirited mare, very fast and of great endurance. Over three hundred armed beaters from the widely scattered tents of the Tai' Bedouins had ridden out the previous day to the foothills of the Jabal Sinjar, there to cut off the retreat of the wolves into the northern mountains. Bands of gazelles and many bustards and other fowl fled before us. But we left them untouched, as we were after other game. 224 [136]

Only when the left wing of our riders roused two wolves did we give chase.

Wolves do not break cover and "go away" as foxes do, but there were other things to which one had to give attention in this hunt. Moles and burrowing mice had undermined the ground and more than half of our horses "took a toss" as they stepped into the hidden holes.

We galloped about twelve miles, and four or five wolves had been put up by the beaters. Our horsemen followed them tirelessly. I came so close to one animal that I could almost have touched his fur with my outstretched lance. My horse followed the runaway with the ardour of a bloodhound. I had therefore to give my undivided attention to the dangerous ground and repeatedly turned the mare aside, sometimes in the very nick of time, to prevent her floundering into one of the sandy burrows.

The slender lance rested perfectly balanced in my hand. My wolf slackened speed somewhat and my mare

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins M 34

224 gained on him. In a few moments we were on top of the shaggy brute. He loped along with his head on one side, watching me out of the corner of his eye. He was cunning enough to keep always the same distance from my mare's forefeet and just clear of the point of my lance. If I urged the mare to a spurt, the wary old robber increased his pace just sufficiently—imperceptibly, but enough—to keep out of reach. At last, however, I thought my opportunity had come. With a vigorous thrust and a twist of the wrist, I aimed my spear at the wolf's shoulder. I put the whole weight of my body into it, so certain was I that I should spear him.

The tip of my lance actually grazed his pelt, but again the cunning old devil had the best of me, and slipped away from danger, and loped off. The lance drove full force into the ground and jerked me, as on a vaulting pole, high into the air. The shaft split into four parts, and I landed head over heels on the hard gravel beside my mare, which had come down on to her knees. Fortunately, the damage to both of us was trifling; a little skin grazed off, but that was all. I therefore mounted my good mare again.

Sheykh Tai', who had already speared one wolf, now joined the scattered group of riders to which I belonged. He threw aside his lance and, taking an automatic rifle from one of the beaters, galloped in pursuit of my wolf to prevent it getting clean away. With a long shot, he smashed one of its hind legs. The wolf tumbled over several times and rolled on the ground, snapping at the broken leg, until a second bullet ended its life.

I: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins M34

With the Tai' and Shammar Bedouins

Sheykh Tai' threw several handfuls of sand over the spilled blood—for so desert custom demands. Blood is *haram*, that is, "forbidden." Opening the jaws of the dead animal and pointing to the wicked fangs, he said: "Thou and I are kinsmen for the traces which thou leavest behind are the same as mine." (We are both robbers, he meant—like all despised Bedouins.)

Later in the day, as we galloped on, we sighted in the distance what at first we took for some of our mounted hunters driving wolves towards us. But they did not move.

I thought I could recognize riderless horses, watching us with raised heads. But Sheyk Tai' laughed and cried out to me that they were neither horses nor horsemen, but wild asses. I would not believe him at first, for the animals seemed too high in the leg.

Sheykh Tai' pointed out to me that the troop had a leader and this became apparent when the shy creatures ran off. We did not follow, and they disappeared into the clear distance of the Sinjar Mountains.

Fleeting shadows cast from above now hurried across the plain before our horses. I knew them of old from raids in the inner part of Arabia. They were the "Sharers of the Prey."

Shading my eyes with my hand, I looked up to the sky, where on motionless pinions the great vultures were sailing. They knew well the purpose of our ride; and they were sure of their feast of dead wolves. A widespread cloud of dust rose on the horizon and moved towards us. These were the beaters, whose semicircle stead-

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Bedouins MJ4

224 ily narrowed as it drew near. They started hundreds of gazelles that fled past us, but Sheykh Tai' and his men shot only a few of the fat bucks in their midst.

During the day's hunting, our party gave chase to fifteen wolves, of which nine were killed. One of them had made a kill of two gazelle kids, whose remains were still lying about. The mother, who perhaps at first had fled, returned and stood near by, bleating, as gazelles will. I could not bear the pitiful cries of the poor animal and gave her the *coup de grâce* with a bullet. It was the only gazelle I have ever shot, for I could never bring myself to kill these beautiful, graceful creatures.

It was evening before our body of huntsmen, laden with booty, arrived back in camp.

574 Three days after the wolf-hunt a slave of Mishal ibn Faris, Chief of the Shammar Bedouins, arrived, with an invitation to me from his master to visit him and his tribe, which was then camping south of the Jabal Sinjar. [431] He also sent me as a present a golden-brown *aba*, such [486] as is worn by the Shammar in Hayil. It was to serve as a symbol which would ensure a safe journey for me, and his slave would be my guide.

619 628 The Shammar and the Tai' Bedouins are hereditary enemies and their pasture lands are always, and were especially now, very dangerous regions in which to wander. Therefore, this was an act of particular courtesy and attention on the part of the old *sheykh* to give me safe conduct to his camp.

574 431 The following day I bade farewell to the Tai' Bedouins. Unfortunately, I could not accept the mare

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

223 falcons have such sight and still fewer such spirit. It is well that he seeks a mate. God grant that one day we may find his brood."

The call of the wild had lured Suhayl away, and he had obeyed the impulse of his blood.

•224 With loud cries the Bedouins urged their mares forward, again racing each other. For today, however, though it was still early, the chase was over; for the [231] heat of the sun is considered harmful to both greyhounds and falcons.

Amir Fuaz gave the order to rally, and we all proceeded to the previously appointed camping-place, where shortly after the pack-camels arrived with water-skins. In a straight line we were, at the most, seven miles from the main Ruala camp, but in our criss-cross riding we had covered nearly thrice that distance.

When fuel had been collected, coffee was made and hares and bustards roasted. From all quarters riders came in on breathless horses. Groups of men clustered round the small fires. The camel-riders of our beater-corps trickled in, bringing an abundance of game—pintail grouse, bustards, hares, foxes, badgers, gazelles. All the carcasses were ranged on the ground near Amir Fuaz and the other *shiyukhs*.

The thirsty mares were watered only after they had rested awhile, but the panting and tired greyhounds had [223] water splashed into their mouths immediately. The falconers placed their hawks in cooking-vessels, partly filled with water, wherein the dusty birds fluffed and preened their feathers.

Huntsmen lay at ease, sipping coffee and talking.

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

Near me a fine, full-grown, reddish-brown falcon sat captive on a horizontal perch. It fluttered its wings and tried to fly away, but a strong leather strap held it fast. It had been captured only two days before, and its eyelids were still sewn together, as is the Bedouin practice with newly caught hawks. Dugan, the hawking-slave, had brought this wild bird along to accustom it to the riding. 223

Towards evening, Fuaz sent some horsemen to the tribal encampment (the Ruala were in migration), to ascertain where his tent was pitched, and after supper, under the shining moon, we all set out for it. 224

That moonlight ride through the tranquil night was a wonderful experience. Widely spread out, in smaller or larger groups, we rode along at a walk. Mnahi, chief of the Amir's bodyguard, beat time to the Bedouin songs, which from a distance sounded like a faint, "Yo-ho-loo-oo, Yo-ho-loo-oo." [533]

Riding up a rise, I could fancy that the earth ended beyond it; I always expected to find a dark abyss with an illuminated ocean, opal light and stars rising from its depths.

Lights did in fact appear as we topped one ridge—red campfires. They covered the plain below far and wide. It was a great Ruala encampment that lay before us in the shimmering moonlight—a magic picture, a fairy-tale of the desert. Distant murmurs fell on our ears, bringing a touch of reality to the unreal.

We rode down, a wave of singing horsemen, that melted away into the shadows of the black tents. Here we dismounted, tied our horses to the tent ropes, and

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

entered the goat-hair roofs to sit round the camel-dung fires.

After midnight the parties broke up and we returned to our own camping-place. The Bedouins love these nocturnal palavers and, when not wandering, rest during the day in preparation for the long evening sittings.

We rolled up in our sheep skins for some hours, close to the fire, for the night had turned bitterly cold. Scarcely had we fallen asleep when it seemed to be time to get up again. It was still dark. Muffled figures rose and moved to the glowing embers, warmed their hands over them and thrust twigs into them to light their cigarettes.

"Get up, children!" was the cry.

The slaves went down the lines of camels, took off their woollen knee-hobbles and kicked or slapped them on the flanks. One by one the *dhaluls*, shadowy in the dark, rose and were saddled. The mares were as yet spared; they were to be ridden only in the chase. We led them with us, as usual, tied to our camels.

Dawn passed into a glowing, golden morning. Far out over the plain everything appeared pure and transparent, even in the farthest distance. Our spirits were refreshed, our senses awakened. The hunters changed from camel to horseback when we neared the ponds of Khabra Mirfiah, toward which ran many gazelle tracks.

Our beaters swarmed out and quickly put up a troop of gazelles, which they drove toward us.

The wild hunt was up. Halloo! How our mares stretched out! How the hoofs flew, as hunters and

Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

hunted spread out over the plain and the drivers put 224
up ever new herds before them!

A group of riders, of which I was one, came almost within striking distance of one band, but the fleet gazelles always managed to elude us. The headlong ride had already lasted more than an hour, and our horses trembled and panted from exhaustion. Some gazelles had succeeded in breaking through the scattered line of hunters.

Amir Fuaz and his men now unhooded and released [223]
their falcons. The liberated birds shot away. With incredible speed they overtook the gazelles and chose their victims. At first they flew above them close to the ground, then swept forward and obtained a hold between their horns or on their necks. With desperate plunges and side springs the terrified gazelles endeavoured to free themselves from their murderous assailants, but without avail. With their talons hooked in the scalp or the eye-sockets of the gazelles, the falcons struck wildly with their wings and beaks at their eyes to impede their progress.

Horrified, I reined in my mare. A blinded gazelle dashed past me, but she was no longer able to escape the pack of greyhounds which, overtaking her, seized her hocks which they did not release even when they tumbled over and over. From the swirling cloud of dust came the bleating, bellowing, and groaning of the stricken gazelle, which ceased only when the huntsmen, racing up, put an end to the animal's suffering.

The falcons soared above the heads of men and beasts, all wild with the excitement and the lust of killing. The

l: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

224 beautiful defenceless gazelles lay quivering on the sand.

Five gazelles fell victims to the falcons and greyhounds at the first charge, and thirty-one more before the huntsmen decided they had had enough and turned homeward.

The gamest fight I have ever seen was put up by a young gazelle buck. He had succeeded in shaking off two falcons and goring a greyhound, and had reached temporary safety. We could still see him quite clearly, but a long way off, standing on the watch, waiting. Our extended line of mounted beaters converged to hem him in, and the hunt of the poor buck started afresh. In my heart, I prayed that the gallant fellow might escape for good, but it looked as if he were spent. Our horsemen drew nearer and nearer and, when the ring had reached striking distance, three strong hawks flew at the buck. In no time they were upon him; and once more we beheld a desperate contest.

The Ruala had agreed that this fight was to be fought out by the falcons alone, without help from the greyhounds.

Our troop of horsemen galloped, shouting, after the fleeing buck. He was not a hundred horse-lengths ahead, so that we could clearly follow his contest with the three falcons, and we came steadily nearer. Suddenly he would swerve away, throw himself on the ground, turn somersaults and speed on again, doubling right and left. It was no easy task for the falcons to get the better of this master of the art of defence.

It was probably not his first fight against the terrible hunting-hawks.

: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

These hawks, too, were masters in their way. Despite 224
the buck's resourcefulness, two of them managed at last to fasten on his head and neck. Suddenly riotous shouts of applause from the huntsmen rose above the panting of the horses and the drumming of their hoofs. But these plaudits were not for the falcons; they were for the doughty buck. He had checked abruptly in mid-career and leaped bolt upright in the air. With the same mighty swing he threw himself on the ground, tumbled over, and with a sidelong thrust of the head, drove his small dirklike horns into the ground, and executed a few more somersaults, having maimed one hawk, gored another to death, and crushed the third, which had fastened upon him but a few moments before.

It looked as if the buck could never rise again, that all his delicate bones must be broken.

The whole episode had taken place with the speed of lightning—and there was the desperate animal on his legs again, and off in full flight once more, before one had time to take in what had happened.

Fearing that the buck would be lost, the huntsmen unleashed the greyhounds after all; but it was too late. The hounds chased for some time after the little cloud of dust far ahead of them, but the hero of the day disappeared in the glassy distance.

"Ya ishli—ya ishli!" the huntsmen shouted—the rallying cry of the Bedouin to his hounds.

Our ride back was not like our merry ride out in the morning. Many of our mares were lame, yet they had to carry not only their tired masters, but the best part

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

•224 of the hunting trophies; and several injured greyhounds into the bargain.

825 Noticing on Amir Fuaz's *abu* droppings of his falcon,
5654 I attempted to brush it off, but the young Prince stopped me and said proudly: "No—no, Aziz! The excrement of the noble falcons stamps us with the hallmark of noble birth."

224 His words explained better than any conception of
181 mine the true inwardness of these hunts; they are considered noble and honourable. The nobility of the desert (its "large-eyedness" as the Bedouins call it) must be experienced and tested; but noble and large-eyed are the Bedouins are, so are also their horses, camels, greyhounds, and falcons, and no less the Bedouin's prey—gazelles, antelopes, and ostriches.

But the ignoble man or beast the wandering Arab despises. He holds them beyond the pale, beyond the law of the desert . . .

". . . die that they might have new life;
For only what is weakling dies,
That what is strong may live."

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

CHAPTER II

ANIMALS

CARNIVOROUS ANIMALS

Various animals live on the pastures visited by the Rwala. The *fahad*, panther, is found particularly on the uplands to the northeast of the depression on Sirḥān as well as in the environs of al-Hazel.

The *ḫurṣa* is a beast of prey similar to the wildcat, only larger, dark yellow in color, with cropped ears ending with a tuft of long straight hairs. It lives in the territories of al-Heǧera and al-Labbe. It lies in wait for gazelles and is fond of hiding itself in the dry annuals, *al-ḥemri*. The breeze blows the hairs on its ears as it moves the annuals; the gazelles are thus misled and approach it, whereupon it leaps on to their backs, thrusts its claws into their throats, and sucks their blood.

The *ṯub'a*, hyena, dwells in large numbers in dens on the at-Ṭawīl range. By day it is timid, but by night it infests the whole territory, opens graves, devours corpses, attacks wounded or ailing camels, and even preys on crying babies. It has three or four cubs. If the Bedouins observe its fresh spoor near a den, they surround the den, bring a long rope, make a noose in it, and send one of their number after the hyena. The hunter slips the noose on his left arm, crawls along on his stomach, draws the rope after him, and gropes cautiously on all sides searching for the beast. As soon as he catches hold of it, he shouts: "It isn't here, this isn't it! isn't here! I have found a piece of old sheepskin, but it isn't here!" In the meanwhile he slips the noose round the hyena's neck and crawls out. At a given sign his comrades draw the hyena out, kill it, and eat its flesh. The flesh of the young hyenas, about six months old, who are living with their mother, is particularly appetizing. The teeth of the hyena, hung round the neck, protect children against various diseases. The gall of the hyena, when mixed with water and taken as a drink, assuages fever.

2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

The *ab-al-ḥṣejs*, *ṯa'leb*, or *ṛarejri*, fox, is found all over the territory of the Rwala. If its spoor is seen in the morning in the dew, a greyhound, *sluḳe*, is set on to it. The flesh of the captured fox is eaten. The fox has a great grudge against human beings for pursuing it and accuses them of ingratitude. Adam, the first father of all human sons, once found a half-frozen serpent outside the garden of Eden. Being moved by compassion, he laid the serpent in his bosom and returned with it into his garden. The serpent became warm, recovered, and shouted to Adam: "Carry me back at once to the spot whence thou didst take me; I have my family there. If thou dost not carry me back there at once, I will bite thee." Adam could not exactly remember the spot. He walked to and fro with the serpent, who kept shouting: "This is not where my family lives. Carry me back there at once, or I will bite thee." Adam, wearied and terrified, was glad to meet a fox, and proposed to the serpent that the fox should act as judge. The serpent agreed. Adam sat down in front of the fox and was about to explain what the point at issue was, but the fox interrupted him with the words: "Be silent until thy adversary comes." "My adversary is here." "I do not see him." "I am here. I am lying right on Adam's belly." "If thou art Adam's opponent, *ṣebliḳ*, thou must sit opposite him, *ṣebliḳ*, otherwise I cannot acknowledge thee as such." "Very well, then I will crawl out." The serpent crawled out from beneath Adam's garment and sat down in front of him. The fox said: "Thee, O man (Adam), I will call Nejṣûbe, therefore pay heed that thou mayest comprehend everything. Behold the serpent's head, O Nejṣûb beh!" But *Já nejṣûb beh* means: "Oh! a blow upon it." Adam understood the meaning of the fox's challenge, seized his cudgel, which was provided with a heavy knob, *ḳeṛa*, and smashed the serpent's head. Since then the sons of Adam have slain every serpent at sight. But when they began to pursue the descendants of the fox also and to eat their flesh, the latter complained: "Shame unto thee, thou black-headed one! Why am I being pursued? Is it thus that I am requited for my good deed? *Aḥa já ṡêwed ar-ṛis lîh ṡiandîṛ ṯaṛa-l-malḥ.*"

The fox declares that he wishes to live at peace with everyone, but in reality he wishes to beguile everyone. Thus he sent a message once to the raven: "Gladly would I entertain thee, *abyi ahrem lak*." "Good! entertain me! *aṡa 'ahrem*." The

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

thou, hedgehog?" "Near thy jawbone," and actually he perceived the hedgehog in front of him. He went a short distance farther and asked afresh: "Where art thou, hedgehog?" "Here, in front of thy face." The fox was surprised at seeing the hedgehog in front of him. He set off at a trot. The hedgehog was still in front of him. He ran leaping on. The hedgehog was still in front of him. The sweat was pouring off him when he drew near to the pile of wheat, but the hedgehog was sitting on it. Thus the hedgehog gained a victory over the fox. 539x 825

The foxes wanted to make friends with the dogs. After conferring together, the foxes wrote a long letter in which they described their love and devotion as well as their longing for peace, and they sent a young fox to hand the letter to the chief of the dogs. Scarcely had the fox reached the frontier of the territory belonging to the dogs, when he was observed by the guard, and five dogs set upon him. The fox shouted that he had come to negotiate for peace and showed the letter, but the dogs did not believe him. He threw the letter to them in order that they might read it, but the dogs continued to snarl angrily and rush after him, without taking any notice of the white paper. The fox was glad to escape with his life. Bleeding from many wounds and all covered with sweat, he reached his companions. When he had recovered, the foxes asked: "What about the letter?" "They did not believe it." "What? they did not believe it? Why, we stamped it with our seal." "Then the dogs do not trouble about your seal. I showed the letter to five of them. Not a single one could read or write, but they could all snarl and bite, as you see from me."

THE LARGER HERBIVOROUS ANIMALS

The *bedex* (or *wa'al*), ibex, with long powerful horns, lives in the mountains of ar-Rawâḳ, aš-Šâma, aṭ-Ṭawîl, and al-Hûǧ. If it descends to the plain, it does not escape the dogs, but in the mountains it cannot be overtaken. The hunters track the fresh spoor which it leaves when going at night to the pasture. They crouch in a rocky cleft and wait until it passes. Sometimes five or even more men go out to hunt it. One proceeds along the ridge of the mountain, the rest go at fixed intervals along the slope, and during the day they search for the place where the ibexes take their ease. The ibex has very 136 [224]

136 weak sight, but its sense of hearing and smell are excellent. The female protects her young with her horns.

The *baḳar al-maha* (or *baḳar al-waḥaš*), Beatrix antelope, attains the size of a one-year-old calf. It is white and has straight sharp horns, with which it defends itself against dogs. During the day it is most fond of frequenting the deep funnel-shaped pits of the sandy desert an-Nefūd. In the summer, when the Bedouins do not encamp in the Nefūd, it grazes quite freely even during the day, while in the rainy season it goes out to the pasture only at night and is very timid. If it is alarmed it will flee for a whole day without stopping. Its sight is bad. A huntsman in a white shirt can approach to within gunshot of it if he advances against the wind behind a white horse or camel. The male is called *ṯōr*, the female *bḳera*, the young *'eǰel*. Its flesh is very tasty. The skin is used for making water bags or coverings, and from the fat skin at the back of the neck, known as *'or'ara*, the Bedouins sew gauntlets, *daraǰe*, for protecting the hand against saber wounds.

The *ẓbi*, gazelle, forms whole flocks, *ǰemāle*, in al-Ḥamād, especially in the territory of al-Manāṣer on the southern border of Palmyrena. The male is called *teja*, the female *'anz*, the young *ḫiff* (or *ṣaṣāl*). The gazelle is known as *rim* if it is white, *'afri* if it is white beneath its belly and yellowish on its back, and *ḥamri* if it is of a pinkish tint.

224 The best gazelle hunters are the men of the Šlejb tribe. Their favorite method is to hunt in twos. One does the driving, *ḥawwāš*, the other the hunting, *ḳannāṣ*. The one who does the driving wraps skins, *ḥabbāǰāt*, round his knees and elbows and crawls on them towards the flock of gazelles, endeavoring to drive them up to the hidden marksman. In a single day they capture ten to twenty gazelles.

In al-Manāṣer the gazelles are driven into extensive enclosures. A wall about one and a half meters high, shaped like a figure eight, is built of stone without mortar. The lower loop is only half finished. Where the two loops meet, a narrow opening, *ṭenijje* (or *ṣeǰī*), is left. At several places portions of the wall enclosing the upper loop are a little lower than the rest of the wall. At each of these places a hole two or three meters deep is dug outside the enclosure. The flock of gazelles is cautiously driven into the lower uncompleted loop. This is soon accomplished, because the two walls are about

2;Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

a thousand paces distant one from the other. The gazelles at first advance quietly, but later on, becoming scared, they run along the two walls and try to penetrate as rapidly as possible through the narrow opening into the upper and completely closed loop. As soon as they run through, the narrow opening is blocked up and a greyhound, *slughi*, attacks the gazelles. The frightened animals run round the wall, jump across it where it is lowest, and fall into the pits that have been dug outside. It is said that the gazelles even dream of the narrow opening, *ṣejl*, through which they rush to certain destruction. If a Bedouin wishes to stop a gazelle in flight, he shouts: "A narrow opening is in front of thee, O gazelle! *aṣ-ṣejl jā ġazāl*," and the gazelle at once stops and looks round. If a Bedouin perceives a gazelle when he is undertaking an important task, he is afraid of bad luck, and shouts: "Gazelle, gazelle, let the misfortune vanish as well! *ġazāl ġazāl w-ḫarreq zēl*."

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SMALL ANIMALS

The *arnab*, hare, is found throughout the territory of the Rwala. In the sandy Nefūd it is pinkish-white; in the volcanic regions it is black; in al-Ḥamād it is grayish-yellow. Hence it cannot be distinguished from its surroundings. The male is called *ḫarar*, the female *'edene*, and the young *ḫuwwel*. The full-grown hare is not as large as the wild rabbit of Europe. Like the gazelle and antelope it quenches its thirst with dew only. If a man approaches it, it crouches close to the ground or hides behind a stone in a brushwood thicket and does not move even if the man walks right past it. If, however, it notices that the man is returning, it seeks safety by rushing madly away.

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The hare is said to boast: "I am he with the white lip in the plain with the dried-up plants, who satisfies two and makes the mouth of the third one water; *ana-l-arnab bīḍ'at al-ḫarma milbe' aṣ-ṣafā w-mlayyem aṣ-ṣāliṭ*," or "I am he who hides beneath a tiny shrub, whose fur gives pleasant warmth, and who is not seen except by the camel herdsmen; *ana ḫfēreti ḫafijje w-wbēreti ṣafijje w-lā jiāfni kūd rā'i al-belijje*." If the hare runs away, the Rwala shout after him: "Furry one, furry one, into the fire with him when he's caught! *wabra wabra w-ben-nār minṣabra*." If the hare shows himself to men hunting with falcons, they shout: "Thy appearance is a

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825 good omen to us, but we will show thee to the falcon; *'arejtina-l-ḫejr w-'arejnaš laš-šejr.*"

836 The *ḫanzir*, wild pig, lives only in Palmyrena and in the environs of al-Azraḳ, where it hides in the marshy thickets. The boar is called *ḫâl*, the sow *ḫâbe*, the sucking pig *ḫarnûṣ*. [262] Instead of *ḫanzir*, the Rwala use the word *ṭaḫzir*. The flesh of wild swine is generally eaten.

The *ṣejd aṭ-ṭar'a* is an herbivorous animal of the size of a six-months lamb, gray in color; its head is said to resemble that of a wether below and a human being above. It lives almost solely on the border of the Nefûd, and its flesh is very tasty.

The *wabr*, marmot, is found in the same mountains as the ibex.

The *wâs*, porcupine, is particularly abundant in the environs of al-Ḳa'ara, where the innumerable caves and rocky hollows of all sizes serve as its refuge. When wounded, it attacks a man by biting and scratching. Its flesh is very good.

• [224 The *ḫumṣoḳ*, hedgehog, is also hunted, as its flesh is very
825] tasty. Hedgehog skin is tied round the neck of timid camels. It is said that when they have worn it for at least a month, they cease to be scared.

The *ǧerdi* is a large variety of jerboa. It scrapes deep holes on the uplands and excavates passages into them in such a way that the water does not penetrate even during the heaviest rains. Its flesh is not particularly savory.

The *ǧarbû'* (or *jarbû'*), a smaller variety of jerboa, prefers to dig holes in plains with soft sandy soil and forms long and easily recognizable passages immediately below the surface. These passages are known as *neṣâḳa*. When it runs into its hole, it immediately stops up the entrance with a heap of clay, *ḫaṭ'a*, for fear of snakes. This heap of clay is
224 an unfailing sign that the *ǧarbû'* is in its passages. If the Bedouin wishes to hunt it, he thrusts stalks or branches of plants into the passage at several spots and waits until one or another of them moves. That shows him that the *ǧarbû'* is trying to crawl through, and he kills it with his stick or tramples on it. If he has no time to wait, he tramples on the passages until he drives the *ǧarbû'* out. In its terror the animal often penetrates the roof of the passage and escapes, if the Bedouin fails to reach it with the stick he throws. The
252 flesh of the *ǧarbû'* is very tasty, similar to that of chicken. The

2;Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

are always led by their mother, while their father walks behind them and protects them from wolves, hyenas, and *nasr*. The ostrich has very bad hearing; on the other hand its sight is excellent. It is easiest to hunt near its nest. When there is no wind the spoor of the ostrich is very plain in the sand. The hunter follows it, hides behind every shrub, crawls on his stomach, and so draws near to the bird. If the male observes from a distance any suspicious movement of the shrub or the hunter, it flees with the whole flock, which cannot be overtaken in the sand even by the swiftest horse. Near the nest the hunter can fire at the birds he is stalking. The fat of the ostrich, known as *sihem*, is a remedy for various diseases.

The *ḥandera* is a pinkish bird about the size of a hen. It flies badly and runs in a clumsy manner. It is found solely in the Nefūd, especially on the precipitous slopes of the pits.

The *ḥafra* is larger than the *ḥubāra*. It flies very little. If attacked by the falcon, it lies on its back and defends itself with its claws.

The *ṣarīṣ* is a dark bird the size of a small duck. It lives only in pairs in al-Ḥamād. It has no sense of hearing.

The *hawwa* is half the size of the *ḥandera*. Two varieties live in al-Ḥamād, of which the darker and larger is the *ḥidri*.

The *ḥaṭa'*, sand grouse, is found in the interior of the desert only as long as the various natural reservoirs are filled with rain water. When these dry up, it migrates to the edge of the desert about a hundred kilometers distant from permanent water. The *ḥaṭa'*, *ḥaṭal* (see next page), and the pigeon are the only birds which regularly drink water after sunrise and before sunset. The *ḥaṭa'* never lays eggs near a watering place, but in a remote valley covered with grass and bushes. It digs a tiny hole alongside a shrub, and the female lays three or four eggs, gray in color with dark spots, the size of a pigeon's egg. The birds leave their nests only when flying to the watering place; otherwise they always keep close by them. In such valleys there are usually at least a thousand nests. When the young are hatched they run about like countless tiny chickens and search for seeds. The *ḥaṭa'* never flies alone, but always in flocks. If the flock does not contain more than ten birds, it is known as *firs*; otherwise as *raff*. The Bedouins express surprise that the *ḥaṭa'*, when flying to a watering place — even though it may be a hundred kilometers

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

The *umm ṭwejž*, the turtledove, lives only in the oases. 136
The *ḥzâri'* is found only in palm groves.
The *mkaṭṭa'* eats ripe dates.

The *umm sâlem* is a small ash-colored bird which always flies round camels. If it flies up to a height of ten or fifteen meters, it begins to choke and at once comes down again. Its voice is very pleasant. Once the *umm sâlem* came to the 539x ant and begged: "Give me supper for my children." The ant disposed of her by saying: "Depart! I am constantly attending to the harvest, but thou [illegible] singing; *ana hammi al-ḥaṣâjed w-enti hammeč al-ḳaṣâjed.*" The *umm sâlem* replied: "And yet my voice is often more precious than the whole of thee with thy ragged tail, *ana jowmen mn ajjâm ṭrubi jeswâč jâ mḥazûḳat aḍ-ḍnebi.*"

REPTILES

Of reptiles the Rwala are most interested in the following: 136
The *ẓabb*, also known as *abu ḥamad*. Many declare that it does not belong among the reptiles, because it has four feet of which it can make good use. It is a large lizard with seven vertebrae. It has five toes on each of its feet. Its tail is longer than its actual body. It lives on plants only and is fond of lying in the clefts between stones. The Bedouins eagerly pursue it. 224 If they catch it, they turn it over on its back in order to cut its throat. It then raises its forefeet to protect itself. The flesh of the dead lizard twitches for a long time. It is very tasty. Generally the Bedouins push the *ẓabb* into the sand and light a fire above it. After about an hour they rake the fire away, dig the *ẓabb* out, turn it over, push it back again, and make another fire over it.

The *ẓabb* was originally the chief of all reptiles, being 539x the first one who urged them to prayer and who taught 825 them how to bow down, while praying, and to kneel and touch the earth with their foreheads. When human beings began to increase in number, the *ẓabb* sent forth his spies into the territory inhabited by human beings, in order to find out what weapons the latter possessed and how war could be waged with them. The spies, who were the actual sons of *abu ḥamad*, informed him of what they had seen and heard, and he realized that war with human beings was not possible and that it would be best to hide from them. Accordingly he

Z:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

The Rwala add to the last verse:

Jistâhel at-tumbâk miṯl eben haḏḏâl
alli jaṣurrah bimṭâni redûneh.

He cannot live without tumbac, like Eben Haḏḏâl,
Who ties it even into the folds of his sleeves.

Fahad eben Haḏḏâl, the head chief of the 'Amârât, who camp on both sides of the middle Euphrates, like many other chiefs carried his water pipe on his camel even when migrating or on long marches. During the short halts, when waiting for the pack camels to come up, he would pour water into the pipe from a small pouch, put some moistened and crushed tumbac in the bowl, lay a red coal on top of it, and smoke. Such smokers usually have the tumbac tied in the lappets of their long shirt sleeves. An inveterate smoker of tumbac is generally punished with asthma.

WEAPONS

In every camp there are men employed in hunting. The duty of some of them is to supply the chief with meat for a strictly fixed sum. Such men always carry an old gun and ammunition with them. The ammunition belt, *meḏḏar*, is made of stout leather, *sêr*, to which two leather straps, *ǧnâd*, are sewn behind; passing over the shoulders like suspenders, they are crossed over the breast and hooked by two iron clasps, *bâṭa*, to the belt in front. To each suspender, *ǧenâd*, two burnished copper tubes, *teṭârîf*, for powder are fastened. On the right of the belt the scabbard, *ǧwa'*, of a dagger, *šibrijje*, with an ornamented grip, *naṣîb*, is sewn; here also is tied a pouch, *maḫraṭ*, containing lead bullets, small shot, *raṣâṣ*, and caps, *ḫubṣûn*. A hunter who does not carry his powder in the copper tubes, keeps it behind his belt in a small horn, *ḫarn aṣ-ṣaḫîr*, made of zinc or brass. Fastened to the belt with a long thin chain or leather cord is a large clasp knife, *ḫaṣṣa*, used in cutting the throat of the captured game, so that the blood may flow out. The rifles used by the hunters have caps and even obsolete flint locks.

For fighting, the Rwala have rifles of *aṣ-ṣam'*, *aš-šâhâni*, and Mauser makes. Among the common Bedouins before the World War the *ṣam'*, an old English military gun, was the most

539x 3. O thou, whose donkeys have trampled down every fountain where they have drunk,
What is destroyed thou must repair with timber and stone.

The Rwejli warns the Ṣlubi not to change his vocation and urges him to return to his people.

[619] Verse 1. The Rwala call every Ṣlubi Abu-l-Ḥala, the father of the desert, i.e. the dweller in the barren desert. *Al-ḥala* is to the Bedouin any region where his camels cannot subsist in a particular year. But the Ṣlubi remains with his asses and a few goats even in such places. In the plural the Ṣlejb are not called Awlâd al-Ḥala, but Awlâd Ṛânem, owing to their belief that they all have the same progenitor, Ṛânem. The Ṣlubi has laid up sorrow in his heart because he will be disappointed. The word *kubb* is used of spilling dirty water or [224] casting aside a useless occupation. *Zanâniḥ* are oval pieces of antelope skin which the Ṣlejb tie over their knees and elbows when crawling after game. They usually cover themselves with the twigs of perennials, giving themselves the appearance of long bushes, and then crawl carefully on their elbows and knees to the herds of gazelles, of antelopes, and even of ostriches. [231] 2. The Ṣlejb keep many common dogs, which guard their flocks against the wolves and hyenas by day and night. 3. They never [312] camp near the large watering places, where they might meet with the Bedouins, whom they avoid as much as possible. However, they know every shallow well in channels filled with coarse sand. In the rainy season the water flows down into the rocky channels, forming after long rains a stream which fills the scorched channel for several days, until the surface water evaporates in the hot sun and only the remainder flows under the coarse sand, filling all the hollows and pits of the rocky bottom. These hollows are known to the Ṣlejb, who shovel away the sand and gravel, wall in the hollow so that it may not sink in, cover it with branches and turf, and then pile on sand, to keep out the sun and hide the water from strangers. When in need of water, they open these hollows, water their donkeys, fill their water bags, and carry them to their tents. The thirsty donkeys frequently trample down the water hole which they have just emptied, compelling the Ṣlubi to repair it before the coming of new rains, if his family and his flock are not to suffer from thirst.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

CHAPTER II

Autumn Stirrings

It is early November, the 2nd to be accurate, and I have ordered 132
Salim al Muzaiyin to move his camp out into the *barr*, preparatory to 361
my joining him. We have had a week's steady south wind, clouds are banking up in the West, and we have had distant thunder and lightning. Most of the tribes have left water and are scattering over the hinterland in search of suitable grazing grounds, for the promise of rain is near. All the tent families go off on their own and camp in twos and threes, well apart from their neighbours (a mile or so perhaps), yet within sound of rifle-shot, in case of an alarm, when all must come to the help of the person attacked.

The Badawin camped round Kuwait on the Shamiyah and Dasma 361
wells have already moved off, some to the Kabd region, some to 'Adan, some to the Huzaim and some to the Grain district. The Fidawiyah, under their Amir, Haif bin Hajraf, of the Sulaiman section of the 'Ajman, accompanied by Nahar and 'Ubaid al Mutalaqqim,* stout old warriors both, have gone to the Humatiyat region beyond Manaqish and the Shaqq, 60 miles from Kuwait. They have 223
cunningly chosen their region because the *hubara* have arrived in the Dibdibba, and hunting with hawks is a favourite sport. The Amir, and every self-respecting young brave, possesses his hawk, a *hurr* or *shāhin* (*sakar*, *lagger* or *shāhin* falcon), and all go out as they get opportunity, and bring back game for their wives' cooking-pot. Some, especially the 'Awazim, like also to hunt hare and gazelle with 224
saluqis, and great is the excitement when venison is brought home. 251
The young hunters go far from their tents, and if they find that the gazelle meat will not keep, they spread the carcase out in the shape of a mat, having removed the ribs and larger bones, and

* Was one of the forty who helped Ibn Sa'ud to capture Riyadh, though not among the actual twenty-three who rushed Qasr 'Ajlan in the heart of the city.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait MI1
Bedouins MJ4

B 224 251 prepare the venison with salt into what they call *yellah*, a sort of biltong, slashing it into long slices to allow the salt to penetrate and to enable ribbon-like strips to be easily removed at home for food.

k 132 This is a season[1] for rejoicing, the rains are close at hand, there is a nip in the air of a morning and fires are in demand at night. Once again the desert comes to life after the long, weary, soul-killing heat of summer, the scorching suffocating duststorms, the need to stay close-camped near water, and the ever-present dread that your enemy knows where you are and by a sudden dash may carry off your camels, nay, all you possess, in one swift raid.

B 312 132 For water, the various tent dwellers send in camels to the nearest wells, often as far as 30 miles away, once in five, six or seven days. Neither camel, sheep nor man is very thirsty these days, so water is no longer the immediate necessity of life. As the first rains fall and grass begins to come up, water is less and less required by the live-stock, till finally in the full *rabi'* (spring) when grass is well up and succulent, only man requires it.

B 223 K 223 This is the season also when the Shaikhs of Kuwait, as well as all other rulers in Arabia, start going deep into the high desert in search of *hubara*. The practice of hunting on camel-back has gone. The motor car serves the purpose better. Great hunters, like His Highness Shaikh Ahmad, Shaikh 'Ali al Khalifah and Shaikh Salim al Hamud, are out two or three times a week. They nearly always spend at least one night bivouacking in the blue (*khalla*) without tent or covering beyond their *'abbas*. It is unmanly and soft to take even a small shelter. The huntsman and falcon bearers (*khaddám*) are all of the Rashaida tribe, born Esaus all, with eyes like their own hawks, and with the uncanniest knowledge of the habits of the *hubara*. The courtly and religious Nazzal, famous over North and Central Arabia for his knowledge and eye for country, is there, so are Sa'ud bin Nimran, the lion-hearted and jovial; Addas, the hawk-eyed; Gharaiyib, the smeller of *hubara* from afar, and great raider of war days; Sa'ad, the tracker; Mirshid al Shammari, of the renowned Ibn Twala clan, and old Saif bin Ta'ami, companion of the great Mubarak in many a past raid.

Of hawks we have the famous "Dhiáb", "Kabrit", "Sultán" and

[1] [early November -- August]

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

Joys of Cold Weather

Chap. III

there is a stir in the Badawin world. Suhail (Canopus) has also been* seen, low down in the southern horizon, which to the Badawin means the end of the dread summer, for man and beast then need less to drink. Even the blood grows cooler of a sudden.

A general cheerfulness now takes hold of the Badawin tent-dweller. He has safely weathered one more dread summer, the life-giving rains are coming and with them abundance once again. He joyfully packs up his belongings and by the 15th of October is ready to move. The end of the month sees him gone, rain or no rain. At first he does not go too far from water, for his camels, sheep and mares must still be watered frequently.

With the first fall of rain, however, he is gone on his great annual migration, or, to be more accurate, his grand circular tour. The various sections of the tribe now move together or follow each other from grazing ground to grazing ground, till they have systematically passed over and eaten down all the *'arfaj*, *nassi* and *hamdh* grasses that the rains have brought in their train. Should rains be delayed in a particular area, the tribe skip it and pass on to where the country has become green. The night lightning and the heavy bank of clouds seen of an evening far away on the horizon are their surest guides.

Certain areas are known to be nearly always good in autumn, and to these the shaikhs will usually take their own best camels with them.

This moving in the wake of the grazing is spread over November, December, January, February, March and April, till by May all nomad households are once more beginning to converge slowly on to water. It is a sad period, this having to go, so to speak, "home again" after the glorious annual holiday. During the migration months the tribal tents change ground about every ten days, both for sanitary reasons and because the grass has been eaten up—so the moves are slow, leisurely and pleasant. Nor are distances to the next camp great. It is a period of joy for all, women renew their winter garments, make *lahas*, wear their best frocks and amuse themselves among the flowers. The better-off men hawk the lesser bustard (*hubara*), hunt gazelle

* In Najd Canopus is usually seen between 1st September and 10th September. In Kuwait if the sky is clear it is seen any time after the 20th September, and at about 3.30 a.m., very low down in the south over the Bridal Gate.

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517 (*dhabi*) and generally lead a lazy gossiping life, fattening themselves
224 on fresh *leben*, camel's milk and dates. Should the tribe be at war,
262 then of course this utopian existence is at once changed, and the tribe
722 moves from ground to ground, concentrated closely and prepared
for all eventualities. The Badawin's wonderful methods for obtaining
[202] and passing on news, especially of an alarming nature, now come
into play. If danger is in the air, he knows it days and even weeks
before, and takes necessary precautions. It almost seems as if he were
able to smell danger. Then he gets out his rifle and burnishes it and
622 assembles his cartridges. The shaikh now, of course, leads the tribe on
its march to fresh grazing and selects every site for the tribal camp.
His word is law when the safety of the community is at stake.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SHAIKH AND HOW IT IS MAINTAINED

622 No tribal shaikh holds his position simply because his father was
157 the shaikh before him. In other words, the shaikhship does not neces-
183 sarily pass from father to eldest son. It does, however, remain in the
family, whether it be the shaikhship of a tribal section or that of all-
paramount shaikh, the leader of the whole tribe. For instance, the
shaikh of the Mutair tribe must always be chosen from the Al Dushan
or royal clan; but the heir apparent who wants to succeed his father
and become shaikh after him must prove:

that he has the necessary courage;
that he has powers of leadership;
that he has *hadh* or luck.

777 The Badawin has no use for a man having courage and leadership
622 in plenty if *hadh* is lacking. A lucky general is what the tribesman
167 wants in war, and, still more important, he wants a lucky shaikh in
peace, for to him the whole daily round and welfare of the tribe is
bound up in this word *hadh*. The great Bin Sa'ud, the present Lord
of Sa'udi Arabia, owes his greatness to his having been blessed with
a large quantity of *hadh*, or so says and believes every Badawin of
Arabia. He has other notable attributes, of course, but these cannot
be compared with the all-embracing Luck.

622 The shaikh cannot, on the other hand, say to the tribe that he

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CHAPTER XXVIII

Hawking

223 From the very earliest times hawking or falconry has been looked upon among Arabs as the sport of kings. It was probably introduced into Europe direct from Arabia, after the early Crusades, and certainly came into Spain with the Arab invaders. There is little doubt, I think, that the sport spread with Islam to Persia and even to far-off China, though the reverse process has been suggested by persons who have studied the subject.

Hawking is mentioned by the earliest Arab chroniclers, and many stories are told of how the ancient ruling house of Al Araiar, the hereditary shaikhs of the Bani Khalid in Hasa and Najd, encouraged the sport and preserved game for hawking's sake.

Northern and North-Eastern Arabia are to-day the home of the sport in the peninsula, for it is in this area that the first annual migra-
● [224] tion of the lesser bustard, or *hubara*, takes place. The *hubara* is the principal game hunted with hawks, though hare and even gazelle also give fair sport.

136 The *hubara* appears on the eastern and north-eastern seaboard of the Persian Gulf about October in each year, and birds continue to come till about April, when they gradually disappear again to cooler climes.

The local Arab says they come from the highlands of Persia, but more probably they come in the first place from Central Asia, and migrate south through Persia, to avoid the intense cold. Certainly Persia, Iraq, North-West India, Baluchistan and Eastern Arabia all see the migrating bustard.

A very few remain behind in Arabia each year and breed locally, but these are rare. I have myself seen a couple of *hubara* eggs (15th March, 1935) which were found 40 miles south of Kuwait.

223 From Zubair down to the Trucial Coast of Oman, the *hubara* season is looked forward to with the greatest keenness. Princes, Amirs, great shaikhs, petty shaikhs, and every tribesman who can scrape

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223 motion. The hawk is then hooded once more, and the *hubara* put away in a bag.

If other *hubara* come to the victim's rescue the hawk's work for the rest of the day is over. For the dark green slime exuded violently from the *hubara's* vent is of birdlime quality, and not only half blinds him but glues all his feathers together so that he cannot fly with any degree of comfort until he is washed all over with water and dried.

This extraordinary protective equipment of the *hubara* is of interest. The slimy substance is exuded with such force as to reach a distance of a yard or more.

If the *hubara* seeks safety in immobility, the well-trained hawk, knowing that its quarry is lying low somewhere in the vicinity, at once perches on a bush (the highest close by) and waits for the hunter to come up. The latter then walks up and down and round the hawk, as he would do if walking up partridge in a cabbage patch. As the *hubara* gets up the falconer shoots. Often half a dozen birds will be bagged by this method. All are terrified of moving so long as the hawk remains sitting on the bush, and will allow the sportsman to put his foot on them before getting up.

So wonderfully can the *hubara* crouch and camouflage itself in stony or pebbly ground that I have on many occasions been unable to see the bird I had marked down till I was within ten feet of it. My car has even passed within one yard of a crouching *hubara* without its rising (11th February, 1935).

If the falconer, whether on camel-back or in a car, thinks bustard are about, but are crouching low so as not to be noticed by the hawk, he will unhood his bird, hold him high up, and raise a slow shrill cry sounding like *'A-hoh—'A-hoh—'A-hoh*, and finishing up with a rapid fire of *Ha-Ha-Ha-Ha's*. The idea is to startle the crouching *hubara*, and make him raise or turn his head or show the slightest movement. The hawk will detect the movement, even if half a mile away, and speed from the falconer's hand after its quarry.

HUNTING GAZELLE WITH HAWKS

224 The Badawin goes in for this form of sport much more than the town Arab, purely from a desire for fresh meat. He often hawks

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CHAPTER XXIX

The Ṣalúqi

231 The Badawin, and especially those whose habitat is the eastern and north-eastern part of Arabia, all go in for keeping greyhounds, for hunting and sport, much in the same way as they train and keep hunting hawks and falcons. The pure-bred greyhound is called *salúqi* (pronounced *salúgi*, plural: *salag*), and a half-breed greyhound is known under the name of *lúgi*.

Great care is taken by the Badawin who owns a *salúqi* to see that his bitch is not covered by a common sheep-dog or stray *lúgi*. Hence when she is on heat (*tutlub*), she is either kept closely confined in the tent, or her hind leg is tied up by a leather thong to her collar. This is a somewhat uncomfortable position for the animal, which only finds rest in a lying down position.

231 224 The *salúqi* is kept primarily for hunting and is taught to run down hare and gazelle. The best of these hounds are capable of going out alone short distances from camp, killing and bringing back to their master any hare they can put up. I have in mind a beautiful grey *salúqi* bitch belonging to Shaikh Salim al Hamud al Subah of Kuwait, which used frequently to go hare-hunting on her own when her master was in camp, and two days out of six she would bring back game. She was an exception, however.

Ordinarily two or three youths will go out on foot with two or three *salúqis*, and will beat up likely stretches of ground for hare—the hounds being taught to work separately at intervals of twenty or thirty yards from each other. On putting up a hare they will run it down and break its back in best coursing style, or will run it to earth, when the master will come along and dig it out.

When hunting hares with *salúqis*, the huntsmen usually work on foot, but for gazelle-hunting camels are used. Their height enables the huntsman to spot a herd of gazelle from afar, and when the chase commences he can follow his hounds for miles, as they race after their game.

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Greyhound Types

Chap. XXIX

It is a curious fact that well-trained *salúqis* will rarely lose a gazelle 231
when once it is sighted. They gallop after it for miles until their 224
quarry, either from terror or exhaustion, collapses and lies down. The rest is then easy, for the hounds seize and hold it till the hunter comes up on his speeding camel, dismounts and cuts its throat. On most occasions, however, the gazelle gives his pursuers a run for their money before it is caught and killed. This cannot be said of the unsportsmanlike hunting down of gazelle with motor cars, so unfortunately practised in some parts of Arabia to-day. Here the unfortunate gazelle is pursued at great speed for a mile or so, and when the car containing the hunters catches up its terrified and exhausted victim, the latter is dropped in its tracks by a charge of buck or No. 1 shot, fired at point-blank range. I am glad to say this cruel form of sport, though it became common in Kuwait with the advent of the motor car, was frowned on by the present enlightened ruler, and so ceased to be popular as far back as 1934. In Iraq there is supposed to be a law forbidding the hunting of gazelle in motor cars, but I understand that both there and in Sa'udi Arabia this form of sport is still carried on.

To return to the *salúqi*. The Arabian *salúqi* proper must not be 231
confused with his cousin, the Persian greyhound, though whether in 438
origin he is a descendant of that animal I cannot say.

The Arabian species are two: (*a*) the entirely smooth-haired animal (commonly found among the Mutair tribe), with ears and tail like those of his English cousin, and (*b*) the smooth-haired animal with long silky hair on ears as well as on tail (common among the 'Awazim tribe).

The two types are entirely different, the predominating colours of the former being fawn, reddy brown or black, usually with black muzzles, and the latter with ruddy brown muzzles merging into the black head.

The common colours found in (*b*) type are white, French grey and pale fawn, the ears and tail being always of a lighter colour than the body. Occasionally a mottled grey and white animal is met with, but these most probably come down from the Muntafiq country on the lower Euphrates and are not true to type.

The Badawin *salúqi* tends to be small: he is definitely a good deal 231

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CHAPTER XLI

The Sulubba

The word *Sulubba* is a generic term. The singular of the name is *Sulubbi*, and the plural *Sulaib*. 565 619

Much has been written about this low-class tribe, or more properly community.

They are found all over the northern half of the Arabian Desert roughly from a line drawn east and west through Madina and Riyadh in the south, to another line drawn from Aleppo to Mosul.

In the south they are more despised and looked down on than in the north, and their worldly possessions are less.

Practically every tribe within the area described has a community [463] of Sulubba living with it, as they are found useful as menders of pots and pans, hunters and trackers.

Chief among the Sulubba's characteristics is their uncanny knowledge of the secret water-holes of the country they live in. They are [121] valued for this knowledge by the tribe which protects them, as it is a great asset in war, and most useful on long raids. Some Sulaib, for this reason, are nearly always taken with a raiding party.

Similarly a Sulubbi hunter is nearly always to be found in the [224] entourage of a shaikh, as he usually knows better than others where gazelle and ostrich are to be found.

The Sulubba are said to be Muslims, but few pray properly, and it [795] would probably be true to say that they possess no religion, except when it is diplomatic to appear to have one as in Najd and Kuwait.

The Sulubba men are in general a miserable fawning lot; they affect endearing and diminutive Arab terms of address, and are cringing in their manner.

Both men and women are good-looking above the average, especially the women, among whom there are often very pretty girls indeed. Their usually half-starved appearance is repellent, and gives colour to the Arab story that they eat offal and "animals they find dead".

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as others of inferior or non-Sharif Arab stock. It all depends where the camel-buyer has originated from before he took to the trade. For example the great house of Al Bassam are not only AQAILIS but are considered among the noblest in the land from the point of view of 'sharaf'."

APPENDIX XX

NOTE ON WORD "DÍYA"

K 104

and the various ways it is spelt according to context (see p. 528, Chapter XLII).

1. AL 'IDIYATU al QATIL, means settlement of a killing.
2. DÍATUN, e.g. the court orders that DÍATUN should be taken from the man doing the killing.
3. 'IDIATUN, e.g. "The accused shall pay to the injured party 'IDIATUN of so much" (Qadhis order).
4. The Quran says—"Wa inkan min qaum-in bain-a-kum wa bain-a-hum 'adawatun, fa diatun musallamatun illa ahliha".

APPENDIX XXI

(Ref. to Chapter XLI on Sulubba)

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On June 21, 1949, Amsha al Mohomed al Durwish (Mutair) told me that Bander al Duwish and other Shaikhs kept Sulubba hunters who went off on camels regularly to the Dahana sands to hunt gazelle in summer. They drank from the various "Duhul", and would bring back as many as thirty-five to forty sun-dried carcases of gazelle (jalla). Wooden poles and mats are set up to dry the meat on.

APPENDIX XXII

SOME FISH OF KUWAIT

K 136

(Caught off Masjan Island in a reed fish trap) (hadhara) April 1941. (See also Appendix [illegible] 592.)

*Sheem — Two dorsal fins—on lower lip half inch rough external surface—fork tail.

* Mentioned in Appendix X.

221 camps move to the Euphrates, or on to the main groups of wells around which cluster tented towns of hundreds of families, odd Sulubba families will remain far out in the desert, [312] drinking from some tiny water hole in a lonely ravine known only to the Sulubba themselves. There they will live almost the lives of wild animals, with only a few sheep or donkeys, hunting gazelle and often dressing in their skins.

224 [242] 290 463 The Sulubba alone knows the wild animal life of the desert intimately. As a gazelle hunter, his skill is incredible, and many live very largely on gazelle meat and dress in their skins. The Beduins often employ the Sulubba as guides in the desert or consult them regarding routes, grazing, or camping grounds.

433 231 Apart from hunting gazelle, and menial work for the Beduins, the Sulubba also live by grazing and breeding animals. Some of them are prosperous and own large flocks of sheep. They have a few camels, but their most distinctive possessions are the white asses. Probably the Sulubba originally bred asses rather than camels for riding purposes, because if they had any good camels the Beduins were likely to covet them. But since no Beduin would stoop to ride an ass, the Sulubba were left in undisputed possession. Some of these animals have marvellously swift paces, and are almost as capable of resisting thirst as is the camel.

721 198 During the last ten years, the desert belonging to Iraq, Syria, and Trans-Jordan has been brought under Government control. As a result the Beduins are no longer able to bully the Sulubba quite as unrestrainedly as before and the latter are learning to complain to the police when they are beaten or abused.

563 797 721 In 1919-22, the recrudescence of Wahhabism in central Arabia produced a tremendous outburst